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Monday, May 9, 2016 metro.us | t: MetroPhilly | f: MetroPhilly

‘GAME OF THRONES’ GETS MAGICAL

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PHILLY’S MOST HATED

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3 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

CANADA FIRE RAGES, EVACUEES SET FOR LONG WAIT

1 A wildfire ripping through Canada's oil sands region was set to grow rapidly on Sunday but move further away from heavily populated areas, a fire official said. The fire which started near the town of Fort McMurray in northeast Alberta, spread so quickly that the town's 88,000 inhabitants barely had time to leave. Large parts of the town have been incinerated. The front of the fire was moving southeast, away from Fort McMurray toward the neighboring province of Saskatchewan, said wildfire information officer Travis Fairweather, but was not expected to reach the border on Sunday. REUTERS

ONE WINNING $429M POWERBALL TICKET SOLD

2 One winning ticket matched the numbers drawn on Saturday night for the multistate Powerball jackpot for a payout estimated at $429.6 million, the ninth-highest U.S. lottery prize in history, officials said. The winning numbers selected just before 11 p.m. EDT were 25 66 44 5 26 with the Powerball 9. Lottery officials said one ticket, purchased in New Jersey, had the winning combination, according to media reports. The winner was not identified. Winners of huge lottery payouts sometimes do not come forward publicly for months. It was the largest jackpot for any U.S. lottery since January, when three Powerball tickets split a record $1.6 billion. The odds of winning at Powerball are one in 292 million. Statistics experts say that means an American is roughly 25 times more likely to become the next president of the United States than to win the game. Kelly Cripe, a Texas-based lottery spokeswoman, said Saturday's Powerball followed 17 consecutive draws without a winner. REUTERS

US, ALLIES CONDUCT 25 AIRSTRIKES AGAINST ISLAMIC STATE MILITANTS: US MILITARY

3 The United States and its allies targeted Islamic State in Iraq with 17 air strikes on Saturday, and hit the militant group with eight air strikes in Syria, the U.S. military said on Sunday. Six of the strikes in Iraq were near Mosul, hitting four Islamic State tactical units and destroying four vehicles. In Syria, three strikes were near Mar'a. They struck three Islamic State tactical units and destroyed three Islamic State fighting positions, the military said in a statement. REUTERS

GETTY IMAGES

BOLARIS' WEATHER WATCH: LET'S WELCOME BACK THE SUN

I don't know about you, but these last two weeks of the funk, clouds, drizzle, rain and unseasonably cool temperatures zapped me of energy and overall happiness. Weather moods are quite common as the paucity of sunlight — along with extended periods of unsettled weather — can definitely bring you down and put you in what I call a deep weather funk.

On the other hand, a nice dose of vitamin D (sunshine) helps to boost one's energy and spirits. Whether it's psychological or physiological, we are all affected by the weather.

The reason for the extended period of the funk was due to what we call an atmospheric omega block, which looks like an upside-down U in the atmosphere and locks in whatever type of weather is going on in a particular region.

If you're lucky, you're on the nice side of the block with days of sunshine. If you're unlucky, you live in the funk for an extended period of time.

Unfortunately, the Northeast was locked into the unsettled side of the block, as the atmosphere got cut off from any type of movement, much like a clogged toilet. You need some sort of a kicker to move the block, in our case it was a very strong cool front that arrived Sunday afternoon (just in time for Mom's Day) which relieved us of atmospheric constipation and allowed for the sun to return.

Looking ahead, New York and Boston will see a good amount of sunshine right through most of Thursday, although New York City could see some clouds spill in for a brief time on Tuesday.

Philadelphia, after some sunshine to start the day on Monday, you will see a return to clouds and a passing shower on Tuesday as a stalled front will oscillate over the region into Wednesday morning then clear out.

But before we start doing the happy dance, there are signs that the funk could return as we move into Friday and the upcoming weekend.

Philadelphia

Monday: Sunshine, mixing in with late afternoon clouds. Milder. High 71

Tuesday: Clouds return, a passing shower, cooler. High 63

Wednesday: Morning clouds, then sunshine returns, mild. High 75

Thursday: Sunshine, then late-day clouds. High 74

Friday: Showers through midday, then drying. High 71

Saturday: Rain arrives. High 64

Sunday: Sun in the morning then late shower, cooler. High 63

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George Bengal on the right. "I don't have that much longer, but as long as I can function ... I want to work." PSPCA

An animal lover's dying wish: Support us

Facing cancer, the state's top animal cop wants agency to get more public support.

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George Bengal, director of Humane Law Enforcement at the Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, has a dying wish. Literally.

Bengal, who was recently diagnosed with terminal cancer, says his most urgent wish is that the PSPCA be allowed to continue what he called "his life's passion" — protecting innocent animals from the cruelty of man.

"I don't have that much longer, but as long as I can function and I'm not totally bed-ridden, I want to work," he said. "This job has been my life and my life's passion.

"When people see the name Pennsylvania SPCA, they associate that with the Pennsylvania government," he said. "A lot of people think we get money from the state, the city. That's the farthest thing from the truth. ... Humane law enforcement is all funded by donations."

Aside from spending time with his wife and two daughters Bengal is trying to drum up more support for the PSPCA. His colleagues have even started a fund in his honor.

Last Thursday, fellow staff members held an emotional ceremony to thank Bengal for his years of service at the PSPCA's Erie Avenue headquarters, where roughly 50 percent of the agency's annual $10 million budget go toward law enforcement costs, which include medical care, housing, food, insurance and rehabilitation.

"It's tough," said PSPCA CEO Jerry Buckley. "We've always known that George was courageous when it came to work. We're also seeing how courageous he is when it comes to facing his own death. ... There's no question that we're all very sad. The event that we had on Thursday was kind of the ultimate bittersweet, we were so proud of him, and at the same time so sad."

Bengal was diagnosed in February with Stage IV peritoneal mesothelioma, which means he likely has from just months to less than a year to live.

Bengal started his career in law enforcement 40 years ago with the Philadelphia Police Department. His last assignment was in the bomb squad K-9 unit. He took his dog with him when he retired and joined the PSPCA 22 years ago. About a decade ago, he became director of Humane Law Enforcement, which has about 13 Humane Law Enforcement officers on staff.

"My main concern with the disease I have is that this work is carried on," Bengal said. "We have more than capable people ready to step up and take my place. But we need the public support to do it. ... If we were to go away, I don't know who would do this."

Bengal has already had to watch the PSPCA reduce the reach of its Humane Law Enforcement operations on his watch from the entire state to a more circumscribed area due to funding woes. In recent years, they've turned over shelters in parts of Western Pennsylvania. to local nonprofits.

"We basically left a huge void," Bengal said. "If we're not out there doing it, there is a problem, because it falls back on local law enforcement or state police. They're empowered to do it, but they're not trained for it. They have no place to house the animals. If you make a drug bust, you just put the drugs on a shelf and you're ready to go to court."

Recalling a massive dog-fighting ring bust by the PSPCA, which was documented in an episode of the National Geographic channel's "Philly Undercover," Bengal mentions that the case netted hundreds of thousands of dollars in illegal winnings and two dozen arrests, while city cops seized drugs and guns. But it's clear that nothing makes him prouder than the animals they saved that day.

"Based on that one fight ... we got five search warrants in 48 hours and took down five other locations where we got 40 more fighting dogs," he said. "And all 40 of those dogs were adopted. We didn't lose one. They were all re-homed."

To make a donation to the George Bengal Fund, visit pspca.org or mail checks to the PSPCA at 350 E. Erie Avenue, Philadelphia, PA, 19134.

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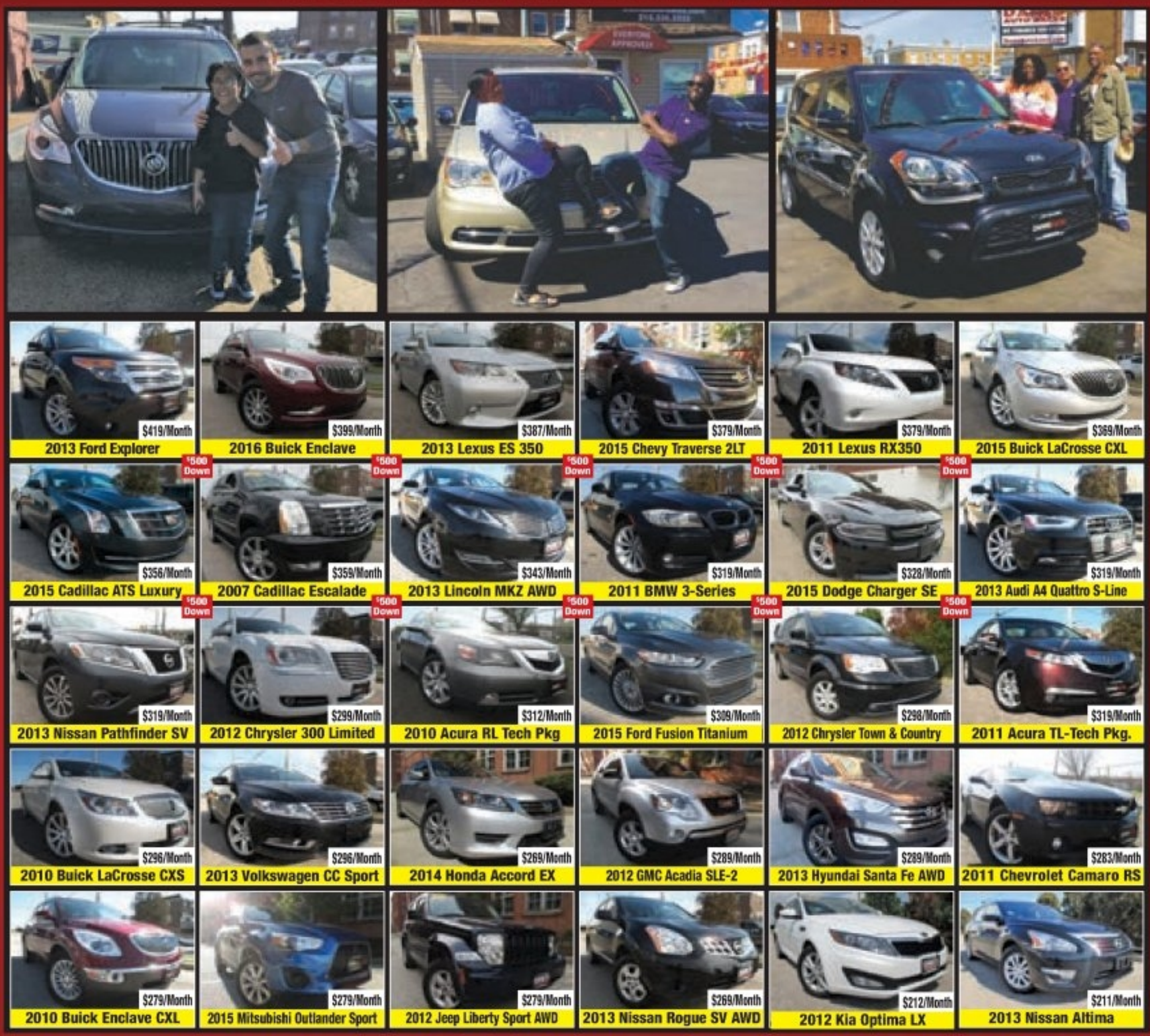

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Patricia Vickers, speaking at the Arch Street United Methodist Church on Friday, May 6, 2016. MICHELLE GUSTAFSON

Philly rally calls for compassion for youth sentenced to life in prison

On Mother's Day weekend, mothers came together to oppose youths being sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

JENNY DEHUFF
@RuffTuffDH
jenny.dehuff@metro.us

Patricia Vickers' son was only 17 when he was sentenced to life in prison for a crime she couldn't bring herself to describe.

"When I got the courage to talk about how I felt and what was going on with my son, to family members and uncles and aunts, I heard things like, 'well, he musta done somethin',' or 'eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth' or 'you know how they do black folks,' as if all of that was good reason to sentence a child to life in prison — like it was all OK."

Vickers was one of several mothers who spoke during a Friday rally at the Arch Street United Methodist Church organized by the Coalition to Abolish Death by Incarceration, a group committed to demanding an end to sentencing youth to life without the possibility of parole.

It was an emotional rally, with the tiny Methodist chapel packed to standing-room-only with 50 people, many seemingly undeterred by the rain on Friday.

Vickers' son was convicted of murder, and she and many others spent the gray afternoon sharing their stories of loss and regret that their family members hadn't gotten a second chance.

"There wasn't anybody who could understand the pain that I was feeling. They all thought that I should forget about my son," said Vickers.

"Even those who were kind to me when I talked about it, kind of shook their heads and shrugged their shoulders and said, 'There's nothing you can do about it.'"

After the rally, the organizers and community members walked from the Center City church to District Attorney Seth Williams' office to deliver a giant Mother's Day card containing messages from the mothers, fathers, family members and friends of people who had been sentenced to juvenile life in prison without parole. Williams could not be reached for comment.

Anita Colon's brother, Robert Holbrook, is serving a life sentence for a drug-related murder he was involved in at the age of 16 just outside of Philadelphia. Colon said her brother didn't pull the trigger in 1990, but he's being punished as though he did. He was sentenced to life without parole.

"He's now 41 years old and has basically grown up and spent much more of his life in prison that he's spent outside," she said.

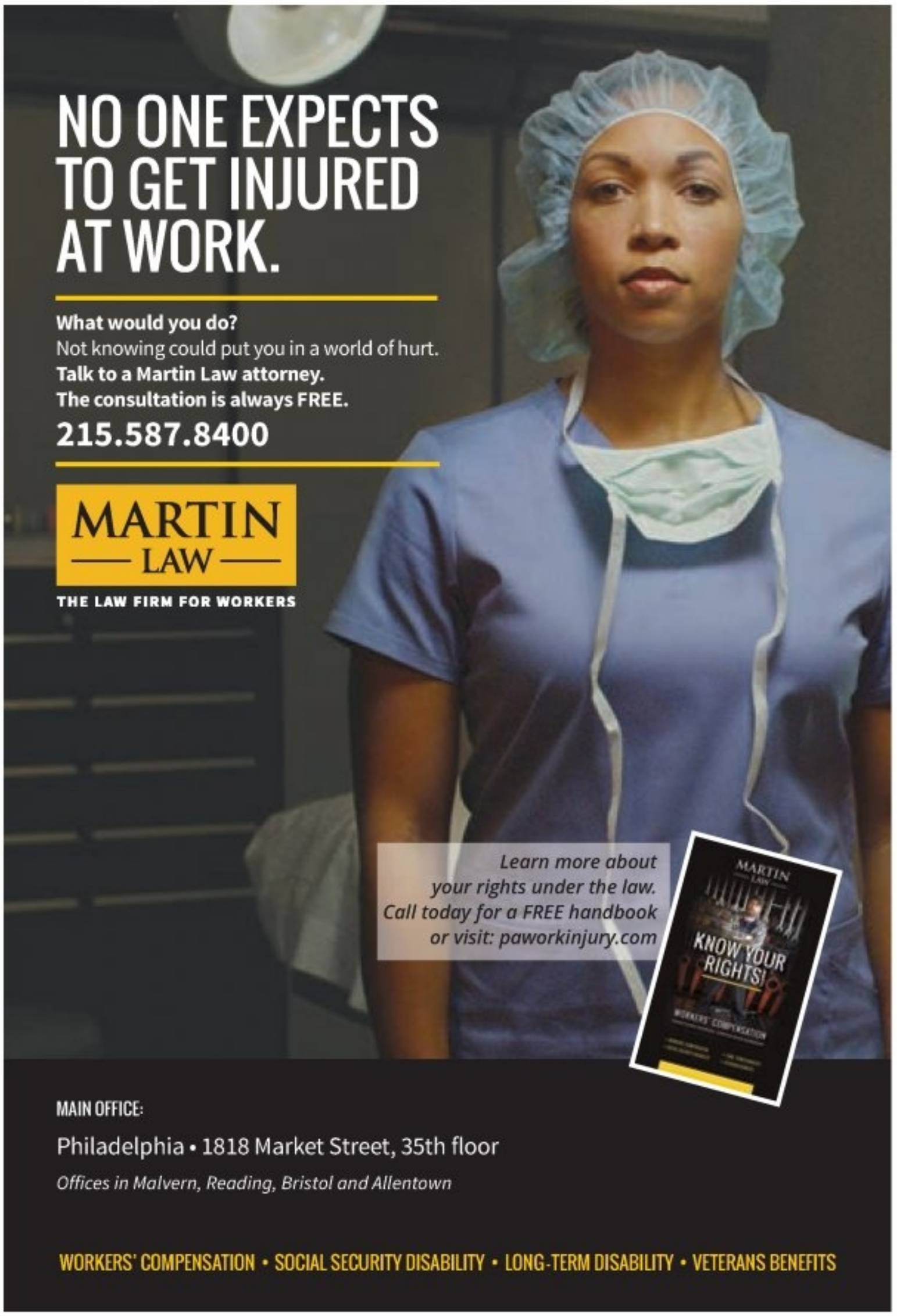
"My mother lost her son in many ways. … At that time we knew what had happened to my brother was very unfair and that the punishment did not fit the crime. The United States is the only country in the world that sentences juveniles to life without any possibility of parole."

Russell Maroon Shoatz III, son of the founding member of the Black Panther Party, called Friday's event a "revolutionary rally," and one in which "changes the paradigm in which people view incarceration."

"We all know now that our prison system does very little in terms of rehabilitation," he said.

"We're here to show that our loved ones on the inside are also asking for that. This is part of their directive."

The group's ultimate goal is for Pennsylvania courts to recognize the U.S. Supreme Court's 2012 decision in Miller v. Alabama, in which the court found that mandatory life sentences for people under the age of 18 violated the 8th amendment's prohibition on cruel and unusual punishment and should be abolished.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Violent Sunday in Philly as four serious assaults, home invasion reported across city

It was a violent night in Philadelphia.

Police reported four violent assaults that left victims in critical condition and one attempted home invasion, all early Sunday morning in a span of less than five hours.

A 61-year-old man was stabbed in Center City, reportedly without ever seeing his attacker.

Police responding around 1:21 a.m. found the victim lying in the road on 12th Street just north of Arch Street with a "stab wound to his abdomen." The victim was transported to Jefferson Hospital, where he was listed in critical condition.

According to police, the victim "stated that he did not see the offender that stabbed him."

At 2:30 a.m. in Olney, a 20-year-old male was arguing with another man when the assailant pulled out a silver knife and stabbed him in the side, he told police. The victim tried to walk to the hospital, but collapsed before being transported to Albert Einstein Medical Center. He was listed in critical condition.

The offender is describing as a 5-foot-10 Hispanic male in his mid-20s with a thin build, light complexion, blue eyes, blonde hair, thin strip of facial hair on chin and jaw, tattoo on the back of neck, full sleeve of tattoos on left arm, wearing a white T-shirt with blue rhinestones, light blue jeans, a white baseball cap and white sneakers, police said.

Later that morning, a couple in Holmesburg were the victims of a home invasion, but managed to chase the invaders off.

The 28-year-old woman and 46-year-old man heard the sounds of tampering outside their

home on the 8000 block of Ditman Street, police said.

The two suspects then allegedly entered the home through an unlocked sliding glass door by the kitchen.

The woman attacked one suspect using a bagful of canned goods, while the male shoved another suspect out of the house. Both men then fled.

The suspects are described as two men about 6-feet tall with medium builds wearing dark hoodies. No further details were available.

Just hours later in West Philly, police responded to reports of a shooting at 51st Street and Haverford Avenue.

The shooting reportedly occurred after a dispute at the nearby Family Motorcycle Club. Witnesses told police the victim left with a woman and was followed outside by the alleged shooter, who began arguing with the victim before pulling out a handgun, firing then fleeing.

An officer arriving at 4:38 a.m. saw several males standing in a doorway over the victim, who told police he had been shot in the back. The victim was transported to Presbyterian Hospital and rushed into surgery, police said. He was listed in critical condition.

The suspect is described as a black male in his mid-20s, with a heavy-to-stocky build, a low haircut, wearing all black clothing, and driving a minivan with a gray top and black bottom.

Meanwhile, gunshots rang out near Allegheny Avenue and Front Street in Kensington around 5 a.m. after an altercation the 22-year-old victim and another male.

The victim was shot four times in the back, face and arm on the 3200 block of North Lee Street. He was taken to Temple University Hospital, where he was listed in critical condition.

No motive was listed and no details on the suspect were reported.

SAM NEWHOUSE

BRIEFS

With baby's death, fatalities rise to 3 in NW Philly crash

Police announced Sunday that a baby girl involved in a fatal two-car collision has died.

Zyana Wilson-Perez, 7 weeks old, passed away from injuries sustained during the crash at 7:15 p.m. on Thursday at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children, the police department announced Sunday.

That brings the death toll from the car crash on Henry Avenue near Hermit Lane up to three.

Eric Barksdale Perez, 6, died less than an hour after he was partly ejected from the backseat of one car during the crash. Zaire Ross-Wilson, 20, who was in the same car, also died from his injuries after the crash.

The accident occured when a gray 2005 Mazda 6 edged over the center line and collided with a 2008 blue Mazda 3. The two passengers in the second vehicle were not seriously injured.

Four passengers in the first vehicle were all in critical condition after the crash. They included two boys, aged 4 and 5, and two women who were ejected from the car, aged 23 and 25.

Police did not immediately respond to a request for an update on the status of those four passengers. SAM NEWHOUSE

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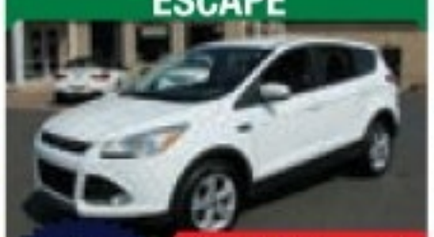
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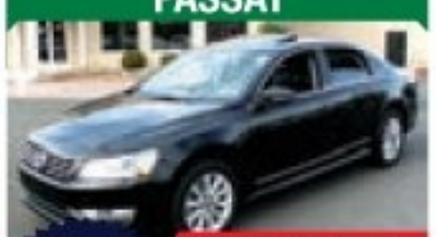
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RACE FOR THE WHITE HOUSE

Trump, in reversal, says the wealthy should pay more taxes

Donald Trump said on Sunday he is open to raising taxes on wealthy Americans, backing off his prior proposal to reduce taxes on all Americans.

"I am willing to pay more, and you know what, the wealthy are willing to pay more," Trump told ABC's "This Week."

But prominent Republicans remain deeply divided over the New York billionaire's candidacy. Republicans such as Paul Ryan, the top Republican in the House of Representatives, have distanced themselves from Trump over his proposal to temporarily ban Muslims from entering the United States.

Donald Trump GETTY IMAGES

Trump's fiercely anti-trade rhetoric is also at odds with the views of Ryan and many other pro-business Republicans.

Trump's tax proposal, released last September, included broad tax breaks for businesses and households. He proposed reducing the highest income-tax rate to 25 percent from the current 39.6 percent rate.

Pressed on the contradiction between his latest comments on taxes and the September tax plan, Trump said that he expected his original proposal was "a concept" and he expected that it would be changed following negotiations with Congress.

"By the time it gets negotiated, it's going to be a different plan," Trump told ABC. He emphasized in interviews with both ABC and in a separate interview with NBC's "Meet the Press" that his priorities were lowering taxes on the middle class and businesses. REUTERS

SOAP OPERA

Name calling, secret meetings, accusations — the unhinged soap opera we call Campaign 2016 is getting wilder. So pack the kids off to school and climb into the Stratolounger, here are my three things to watch this week in politics.

1. RYAN'S HOPE?

Some big Republicans are already endorsing Donald Trump, but Speaker of the House Paul Ryan has put metal in the science oven by withholding his support for his party's presumptive nominee. And the sparks will be sizzling all over Capitol Hill as Congress comes back into session this week. Thursday, Ryan and Trump are expected to meet to see if they can agree on some things. If so, watch for a strained but cordial show of unity; if not, keep an eye on how GOP lawmakers pick sides ... with the political fate of both men potentially at stake.

TOM FOREMAN

Opinion

CNN's Tom Foreman is the author of the new book "My Year of Running Dangerously."

2. THE YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS

So why won't Bernie Sanders tell his army of eager, idealistic young supporters to give up already and throw their support behind Hillary Clinton? Maybe because the senator from Vermont won Indiana and has a good shot at winning a couple more states this month, too. He can't beat her math at this point. Clinton has a virtually unbeatable edge for the nomination. But with every win he presses his argument that he may be a stronger candidate for the Democrats. Just as importantly, he applies pressure for Camp Clinton to adopt more of his positions or maybe take his measurements for a veep suit. Stay tuned ...

3. THE EDGE OF NIGHT

Some frustrated Democrats wanted anyone but Hillary Clinton with her huge negative ratings and political baggage. Some desperate Republicans wanted anyone but Trump with his huge ego and — well, pretty much everything. Now some on both sides and in the middle are hoping for a miraculous third party candidate to emerge from the darkness. Watch for a more names to be floated fast but then abandon hope, because the only three that will stick around are Shoulda, Woulda and Coulda.

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Penn State president 'appalled' by media reports on Paterno

New allegations about Paterno, a legendary figure at Penn State and still revered by many supporters, surfaced last week in court documents in a civil case over settlements with victims of his assistant Jerry Sandusky.

Joe Paterno was fired in 2011 and died in January 2012. GETTY IMAGES

The president of Penn State said on Sunday he was appalled by the media coverage surrounding allegations the university's late head football coach Joe Paterno knew about child sex abuse by his assistant coach as far back as the mid-1970s.

Paterno, who died in January 2012, was fired in 2011 after disclosures that he knew Sandusky sexually abused a young boy in the school's football showers in 2002 and that, while he told university officials, he failed to notify police.

The new allegations involve alleged incidents that are years older.

"I am appalled by the rumor, innuendo and rush to judgment that have accompanied the media stories surrounding these allegations," Eric Barron, president of Pennsylvania State University, said in an open letter on the school's website.

None of the fresh allegations, which threaten to reopen a scandal that rocked the school's vaunted football program and college sports in general, have been substantiated in a court of law and they are unsupported by any evidence, Barron said.

They came in a court opinion by Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas Judge Gary Glazer, who wrote that witnesses testified in depositions that Paterno was told in 1976, 1987 and 1988 about sex abuse by Sandusky.

Glazer's opinion was filed in a lawsuit involving the school's former insurer, Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association.

Since Paterno did not report the three incidents to top university officials or police, Glazer said, the university can legally claim it was unaware of them and thus remains insured for any settlements with victims prior to 1992, when the liability policy was changed to exclude sexual abuse.

The civil case aims to determine whether the school or its insurer should pay millions of dollars in damages to Sandusky's victims.

Paterno's son, Scott Paterno, dismissed as "bunk" the allegations that his father was told about abuse decades ago.

Sandusky, 72, is serving 30 to 60 years in prison after a jury convicted him of molesting 10 boys in incidents dating back to the 1990s. REUTERS

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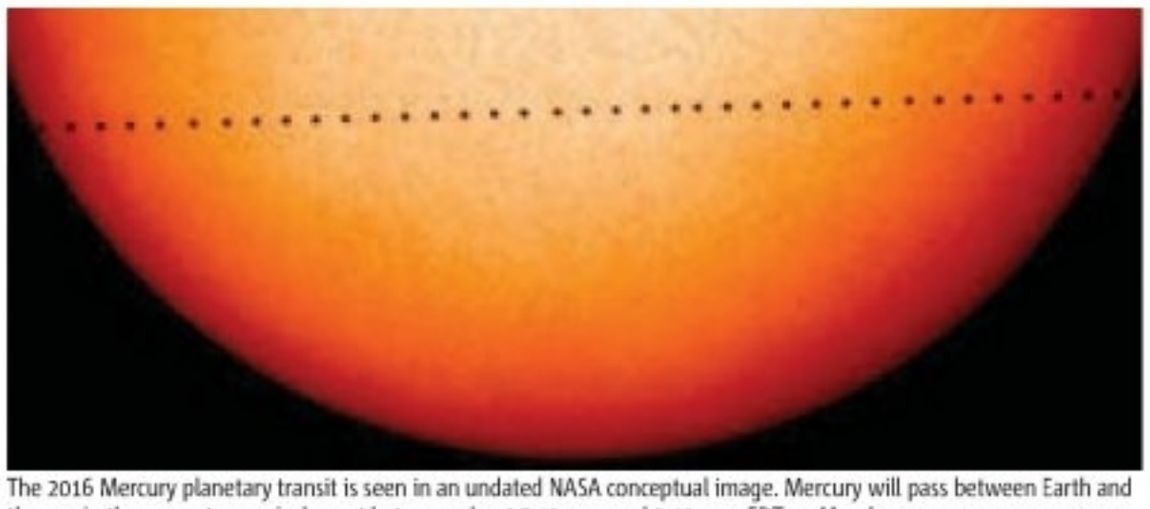
Mercury poised for rare 'transit' across sun's face on Monday

Stargazers will have a rare opportunity on Monday to witness Mercury fly directly across the face of the sun, a sight that unfolds once every 10 years or so, as Earth and its smaller neighboring planet come into perfect alignment.

The best vantage points to observe the celestial event, known to astronomers as a transit, are eastern North America, South America, Western Europe and Africa, assuming clouds are not obscuring the sun. In those regions, the entire transit will occur during daylight hours, according to Sky and Telescope magazine.

But Mercury is too small to see without high-powered binoculars or a telescope, and looking directly at the sun, even with sunglasses, could cause permanent eye damage.



The 2016 Mercury planetary transit is seen in an undated NASA conceptual image. Mercury will pass between Earth and the sun in the rare astronomical event between about 7:12 a.m. and 2:42 p.m. EDT on Monday. NASA HANDOUT

Fortunately NASA and astronomy organizations are providing virtual ringside seats for the show by live-streaming images of the transit in its entirety and providing expert commentary.

The tiny planet, slightly larger than Earth's moon, will start off as a small black dot on the edge of the sun at 7:12 a.m. Traveling 30 miles a second, Mercury will take 7.5 hours to cross the face of the sun, which is about 864,300 miles in diameter, or about 109 times larger than Earth.

"Unlike sunspots, which have irregular shapes and grayish borders, Mercury's silhouette will be black and precisely round," Sky and Telescope said in a press release.

The event will come into view in the western United States after dawn, with the transit already in progress. The show will end at sunset in parts of Europe, Africa and most of Asia.

NASA Television, available on the Internet, will broadcast live video and images from the orbiting Solar Dynamics Observatory and other telescopes. The show includes informal discussions with NASA scientists, who will answer questions submitted via Twitter using the hashtag #AskNASA.

Scientists will take advantage of Mercury's transit for a variety of science projects, including refining techniques to look for planets beyond the solar system.

"When a planet crosses in front of the sun, it causes the sun's brightness to dim. Scientists can measure similar brightness dips from other stars to find planets orbiting them," NASA said.

Mercury's last transit was in 2006 and the planet will pass between the sun and Earth again in 2019. After that, the next opportunity to witness the event will not come until 2032. REUTERS

BRIEF

Feds order Washington subway to tighten safety after rail fire

Federal officials ordered Washington's troubled subway to tighten safety standards because of a rail fire, a directive that followed announcement of an extensive repair program to boost reliability.

The response by Metro subway employees to the explosion of a third-rail insulator and fire on Thursday showed major lapses by the system's control center, the Federal Transit Administration said in a directive.

Metro, the second-busiest U.S. subway system, must "take urgent action to address persistent safety findings with personnel response to safety risk," it said.

The Thursday fire was the eighth smoke and fire incident involving Metro since April 23, the FTA said. Metro carries about 700,000 passengers daily.

During the Thursday fire, FTA said Metro failed to inform it of the incident and the affected track was ordered back into service after a cursory inspection.

The control center also declined to shut off power when inspectors arrived and trains continued to roll across the section, FTA said. REUTERS

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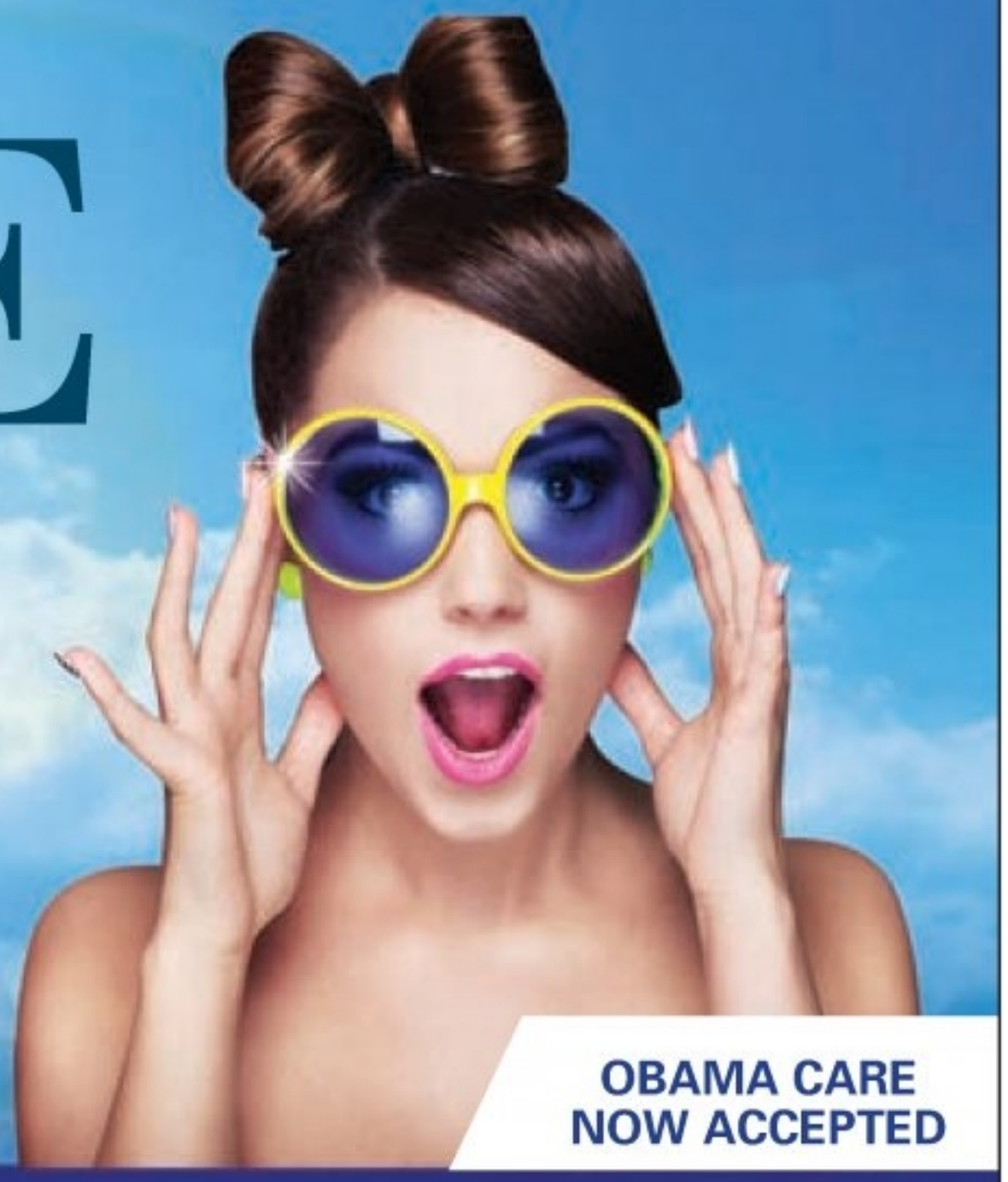

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North Korea leader Kim sets five-year economic plan, vows nuclear restraint

The North "will faithfully fulfil its obligation for non-proliferation and strive for global denuclearization," Kim said at the rare congress of the ruling Workers' Party.

This photo showing North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un was released by North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). GETTY IMAGES

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said his country would not use nuclear weapons unless its sovereignty is infringed by others with nuclear arms, in a speech broadcast on Sunday, and set a five-year plan to boost the secretive state's moribund economy.

Pyongyang was also willing to normalize ties with states that had been hostile toward it, Kim said.

Isolated North Korea has made similar statements in the past, although it has also frequently threatened to attack the United States and South Korea, and has defied United Nations resolutions in its pursuit of nuclear weapons.

The first party congress in 36 years began on Friday amid anticipation by the South Korean government and experts that the young third-generation leader would use it to further consolidate power. Kim became leader in 2011 after his father's sudden death.

North Korea's economy is squeezed by U.N. sanctions that were tightened in March following its latest nuclear test, and Kim's five-year plan to boost economic growth emphasized the need to improve North Korea's electricity supply and develop domestic sources of energy, including nuclear power.

He laid out the blueprint in an address highlighting his "Byongjin" policy of jointly pushing forward economic development and nuclear armament.

On Sunday morning, foreign journalists were told to dress presentably and were brought to the People's Palace of Culture, where dozens of black Mercedes-Benz sedans, with the 727 number plates reserved for top government officials, were parked. REUTERS

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Philippines votes for a new president, Trump-like mayor is favorite

The Philippines votes for a new president on Monday after an acrimonious election campaign that revealed popular disgust with the country's ruling elite for failing to make inroads into poverty and inequality despite years of robust economic growth.

Opinion polls in the days ahead of the vote showed that Rodrigo Duterte — a city mayor whose brash challenge to the political establishment has drawn comparisons with Donald Trump — was comfortably ahead of his four rivals for the presidency.

The firebrand mayor's single-issue campaign focused on law and order tapped into anxiety about corruption, crime and drug abuse, but his incendiary rhetoric and advocacy of extrajudicial killings brought predictions that he would be a dictator.

A woman looks for her name and assigned precinct. GETTY IMAGES

"Mr. Duterte's campaign symbol is a fist — intended for lawbreakers, but seemingly also aimed at the oligarchy," Miguel Syjuco, a respected Philippine writer, said in an opinion column last week. "The message resonates with the frustrated poor who feel let down by the government, but his fans span all classes."

He said Duterte's "change is coming" slogan was "the exactly right message from the completely wrong messenger."

Manuel Roxas, the grandson of a former president and favoured candidate of outgoing President Benigno Aquino, told a recent news conference that the election was "the force of democracy against the force of dictatorship."

Despite these concerns, global risk research firm Eurasia Group said in a report ahead of the election that regardless of who wins the Philippines is likely to continue on the pro-growth and reform-oriented path set by Aquino.

More than half of the Southeast Asian nation's population of 100 million people are registered as voters for Monday's election to choose a president, vice-president, 300 lawmakers and about 18,000 local government officials. REUTERS

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[2] National Average APYs based on specific product types of top 50 U.S. banks (ranked by total deposits) provided by Informa Research Services, Inc. as of 4/1/16. CD Rates: Average APYs are based on certificate of deposit accounts of $25,000. Although the information provided by Informa Research Services, Inc. has been obtained from the various institutions, accuracy cannot be guaranteed.
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The Kardashians are not digging Cuba

How awesome would it be to visit Cuba? Not very awesome, if you're a Kardashian, apparently. The whole team went down to check out the newly available vacation spot — because Cuba is "so hot right now" — but they're apparently finding the amenities a bit lacking. "They love the culture, but they don't like the technology. They've had an issue every two seconds about not having Internet. They complained they couldn't get on Snapchat. They're frustrated and they can't wait to leave," a source tells Page Six. But a rep for Kim Kardashian says it's all a bunch of nonsense. "If there are any issues, they are production issues," her rep says. "The ladies don't have any issues and are having a great time. They knew there wouldn't be Internet service before they came." Yeah, but I can imagine Kim & Co. interpreting "no Internet" as, like, just really slow Internet.

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Speaking of production issues, the folks tasked with chronicling the family's adventures is apparently having troubles of their own — like getting locals to sign release forms. "They don't have reality TV in Cuba. The Kardashians aren't a big deal," the source says. "They are like, 'Who are you? Why are you filming?'" Oh man, it must be nice to be Cuban.

Michael Phelps gave his son an appropriate bro-ish name

Celebrities giving their kids ridiculous names is nothing new. And as far as that trend goes, Michael Phelps' pick for his newborn son isn't so bad, I guess. But man, way to go ahead and define a kid's personality before he's barely had time to open his eyes. The 18-time Olympic gold medalist and fiancée Nicole Johnson welcomed their first child late last week, and what did they decide to call him? Boomer Robert Phelps. Yup, Boomer. But hey, it's your kid, Phelps. Knock yourself out.

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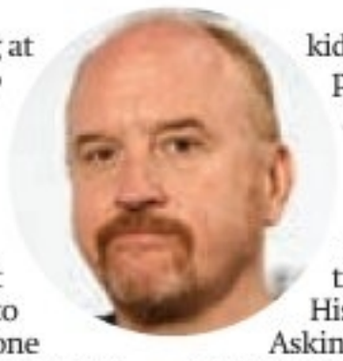
J.R.R. Tolkien vs George R.R. Martin. Epic Rap Battles of History

This one has been a long time coming. The lyrical misfits over at Epic Rap Battles of History pit fantasy fiction's two great authors with too many middle initials against each other, as "Lord of the Rings" creator J.R.R. Tolkien takes on "Game of Thrones" titan George R.R. Martin. And it gets really real, really fast. "We all know the world is full of chance and anarchy, so yes it's true to life for characters to die randomly," Tolkien raps. "But news flash, the genre's called fantasy. It's meant to be unrealistic, you myopic manatee." That's a sick burn, J.R.R.

Louis C.K. quit the Internet and so can you



Are we looking at our phones too much? That's the idea Louis C.K. is working with lately, as he's discovered that looking down to check your phone while in conversation is a new and special kind of rude where you're putting the person in front of you on pause. It's extra sucky when the person is your kid. "My kids are nice people so they just wait," C.K. tells Conan O'Brien. "[My daughter] dies inside every time I do this." His solution? Asking his daughter to set a parental code on his phone's Web browser. "It's supposed to be the other way around," he says. "It's supposed to be a parental code to keep your kid off the Internet."

Ozzy and Sharon Osbourne on the outs

On the one hand, it's never nice to hear about a marriage break apart, but on the other it's inspiring to see that even at age 67, Ozzy Osbourne can throw down like a terrible husband half his age. Ozzy and wife Sharon Osbourne are reportedly calling it quits after 34 years of marriage and several seasons of reality TV scrutiny because Ozzy is allegedly having an affair with his hairstylist. "Sharon went ballistic with Ozzy and accused him of having the affair," a source tells the Sun. "She said she had suspected something had been going on for some time and now had proof. People are wondering whether Sharon went through Ozzy's phone before accusing him. She has done that before, but in the past she was checking if he'd been using drugs." Sharon reportedly kicked Ozzy out of the house, and he's now staying in a Los Angeles hotel. "He is not speaking to Sharon," the source adds. "And she has not let him back into the house." Yikes.

Apps can now match you face-to-face

LAURIE DAVIS EDWARDS

Single and Swiping

Laurie Davis Edwards is the founder of eFlirt, an online dating concierge service, and the best-selling author of "Love @ First Click: The Ultimate Guide to Online Dating."

Your online dating soulmate may be swiping right next to you. ISTOCK

When you're constantly checking your phone, how many connections do you think you're missing out on? If you were paying attention, you might see that cutie at Starbucks who tried to make eye contact or that person on the subway who wanted to say "hi," but decided you weren't approachable with device in hand.

These days, you might not even know the boy or girl next door.

According to a 2015 Gallop survey, more than half of us check our phones a few times an hour. Eleven percent of people even 'fessed up to checking their device every few minutes. Bottom line: Potential partners are all around you and you're missing them.

Proximity-based apps aim to close the gap so you can connect device-to-device with those who are nearly face-to-face.

Cheekd uses your phone's Bluetooth to connect you with matches nearby. When you're within 30 feet of another single, it will send you a notification. If you both opt-in, the messaging and flirting can commence.

Happn shows you matches you've crossed paths with naturally in life. Each time you are within 250 meters of a match, they appear at the top of your newsfeed — and it will even show you the intersection where you encountered each other.

The irony is that these apps are a throwback to the first few dating apps developed — you know, before Tinder existed. And the old-school version of location-based apps weren't even popular.

In 2009, when I started my business and the first dating apps launched, my clients were hesitant use them. "It's creepy to see who is around me," they told me. But today, my clients enjoy it instead. "I get to see guys I'm probably just missing on my commute," one recently told me.

As a society these days, we're less afraid of people on the Internet and more concerned with having access to as many singles as possible to find the one.

Look up and see who is around you ... or at least join apps like Cheekd or Happn to find out who you're missing nearby.

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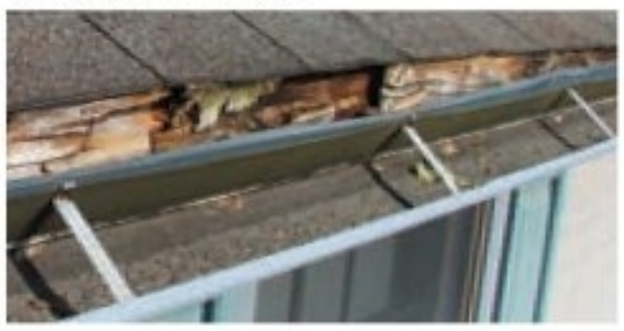

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The season of magic

"Game of Thrones" is entering a new phase, and Carice van Houten's Melisandre is at the center of it.

DARIA BUYANOVA
Metro World News
letters@metro.us

GETTY IMAGES

Melisandre is in the throes of a crisis of faith. HELEN SLOAN, HBO

The sixth season of "Game of Thrones" started off with two shocking twists — both involving the Red Witch, Melisandre.

Though she'll have to tweak her skills when it comes to seeing the future, Melisandre was key to the resolution of the biggest mystery since the end of the show's fifth season last June: how Jon Snow will come back to life. (Because nobody actually believed the showrunners when they said he was dead, right?)

Melisandre's magic may not have put Stannis Baratheon on the Iron Throne, but if it can raise the dead — and, in another shocking reveal, keep her alive well beyond a natural human lifespan — then maybe the Lord of Light she worships hasn't forsaken her after all.

Known for violence on a personal and battlefield scale to move its plots along, the sixth season of "Game of Thrones" is being dominated by those who can wield magic. We asked Dutch actress Carice van Houten about what's we can expect from Melisandre.

How did you approach the character this time around after everything that happened in Season Five?

We've left my character in a really bad state. We've never seen her so shaken, so out of control and even confused and vulnerable. In the very last scene [of the fifth season], where she's confronted with devils asking: "What happened?" — she can't even speak; she's completely thrown.

For me, it was great as an actor to move away from this controlling, fanatic, strong character who never shows any emotion and is just very, very focused. And all of a sudden, she's like, "Oh, my God! What happened?" And I loved it; it's my favorite season.

Melisandre horrified a lot of fans when she sacrificed Shireen, the daughter of Stannis Baratheon, last season. She's been at the center of a lot of the worst events over the show's history.

As an actress you go, "Wow! This is great, epic and nobody is going to forget this." I mean, I had a few of those: the leeches on the penis and the giving birth to the shadow babies. But this really topped everything, of course. As an actor you think this is great, but as a person you think it's the most horrible thing you have done. And it's not going to get me any sympathy points.

The shooting itself was also quite harsh. It was extremely cold with strong wind and snow. And, of course, my character is never cold, which is also a challenge in itself. And then there's Kerry [Ingram, who plays Shireen] — a sweet, bubbly, lovely girl, who is also a very good actor — making you believe she is really on fire. That doesn't really make it easier. But we did have a lot of fun.

Have you been harassed by fans over your character's actions?

Oh, yes, but it's funny — there are also people who like my character. I'm a bit suspicious of these people [Laughs]. But, you know, it's nice for an actor. Obviously, people like to hate, or like the mystery Melisandre is surrounded with. And it's difficult to like a character like this, in comparison to the Onion Knight.

Should we expect more nudity in Season Six?

This is my answer: Yes and no. And you will see why.

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New on Netflix

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"SPECIAL CORRESPONDENTS"

Eric Bana and Ricky Gervais have so-so banter in the latter's Netflix movie "Special Correspondents." NETFLIX

This column tends to be about things you should watch on Netflix. But Ricky Gervais' latest attempted movie film is too big too ignore, and we're sorry to report it's another depressingly toothless slog from a talent who sometimes has nothing but fangs. Like "The Invention of Lying," Gervais takes a rich, nasty subject — here, two radio journos (Gervais and Eric Bana) who have to fake reports from war-torn Ecuador after they miss their flight — and does next to nothing with it. Even the banter between the stars is on autopilot. Only Vera Farmiga, as a borderline-sexist harpy profiting from Gervais' plight, manages more than a faint smile.

"MEEK'S CUTOFF"

Michelle Williams plays one of a group of people stuggling to relocate out West in Kelly Reichardt's indie "Meek's Cutoff." OSCILLOSCOPE LABORATORIES

Your relatively small big-screen TV — or, ye gods, your laptop — is no place to view Kelly Reichardt's hyper-minimalist indie Western. It's a film lousy with drawn-out stretches of not much at all: an all-star cast of Manifest Destiny types plodding exhausted across arid landscapes on loud, rickety wagons, perhaps never to arrive at anything but an early death. In a theater, where one's attention is more likely to be drawn to the screen, it's hypnotic. At home, there's always your phone. So, if you must, draw the drapes, kill your lights and your gizmos, and drink in the beautiful despair.

"SMALL SOLDIERS"

The director of "Gremlins" does a movie about destructive action figures: How do you screw this up? By "you," we don't mean Joe Dante himself, who turned in another hilarious, delirious and nasty piece of subversive popcorn-art. We mean the people of 1998, who treated it with a shrug before tossing it into humanity's memory bin. "Soldiers" is not as iconic as "Gremlins," but it's as fleet-footed as it is scathing,

We're sorry to report that Joe Dante's delightful 1998 comedic satire "Small Soldiers" originally tanked. PROVIDED

replacing cackling, Looney Tunes-y beasties with sentient, equally destructive army toys, which prove gung-ho about laying waste to the American suburbs in order to save it. Which part of this doesn't sound awesome?

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5 Acts you can't miss at Live from the Lot this year

The jazz, soul and funk music festival returns to Ardmore on May 20.

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For most commuters, the parking lot behind Ardmore station is nothing out of the ordinary. But in a few weeks, the space will be transformed into a melange of music and good times for the second annual Live from the Lot music festival. Presented by Ardmore Music Hall, the event includes some of the nation's top jazz, soul and funk talent as well as some local favorites. Beginning with the opening night party May 20, Live from the Lot will be dishing out the funk through May 22. Here are five acts you can't miss.

If you go

May 20 -22
The Ardmore SEPTA parking lot
Various times and prices
Livefromthelot.com

Snarky Puppy

The two-time Grammy Award winning band has many moving parts — more than 13 core members play a variety of instruments from guitars and keys to woodwinds, brass and bass. Led by Michael League, who also composes the band's music, Snarky Puppy delivers with exceptional musicianship and good vibes.

The Revivalists

This seven-piece rootsy-rock band formed in New Orleans in 2007. In 2015, they made their major label debut with "Men Against Mountains" on Wind-Up Records. It ranked No. 2 on the Billboard Alternative charts and got more than 2 million Spotify plays mainly through word of mouth. See what all the fuss is about when they play Live at the Lot on May 21.

Marco Benevento

Tickling the ivories professionally since 1999, Benevento's recent release, "The Story of Fred Short," finds him tapping into a new instrument — his voice! The prolific songwriter, pianist and producer went in a more pop direction with this album but still retained the inventiveness of his older work. His live show will undoubtedly satisfy jazz heads and Jack Johnson lovers alike.

Enjoy two full days of outdoor music May 21 and 22, with an indoor kick-off party the evening of May 20. KARL MCWHERTER

Darla performs May 22 at 1 p.m. MAGDALENA PAPAIOANNOU

Darla

The members of this eight-piece brass/funk band might still be in school at Drexel but they're already making big waves in Philly music. Known for their lively shows and quirky compositions, Darla has already opened for George Clinton and will likely be a crowd favorite at Live from the Lot this year.

Electron performs May 20. ANDREW BLACKSTEIN

Electron

Electron is a supergroup of some of Philly's most badass musicians: Marc Brownstein and Aron Magner of Disco Biscuits, Mike Greenfield of Lotus and Tom Hamilton of American Babies. If you're looking to lose yourself in lights and livetronica, don't miss their performance at the festival kick-off party Friday night.

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A spelling bee for a-d-u-l-t-s

The Philly Lit event at Johnny Brenda's will raise money for Fishtown nonprofit The Head & The Hand Press.

A.D. AMOROSI
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letters@metro.us

Zoe Gould and Maryan Captan are the masterminds behind the first annual Philly Lit Spelling Bee at Johnny Brenda's on Friday, May 13. The erudite event is a fundraiser for The Head & The Hand Press, a Fishtown nonprofit that publishes artisanal books.

The evening will also celebrate many other uniquely focused Philly literary organizations as lettered academics compete for the title of "Majesties of Orthography."

Rather than a duel with pistols or jousting match, Gould and Captan chose a Spelling Bee for its first annual competition because of its "whimsy," says Gould. "We all labor hard to put out great work and do great workshops and never really take pause to assess why we do this — it's because we love words, the technical aspects of writing. So what better way to incorporate all the members of our community than to have a party centered around words."

Esposito, the night's emcee and founder of The Head & The Hand Press, admits having problems spelling "antagonistic" — "a word that thwarted my victory in a fifth grade spelling bee, and I'll be damned if I let it happen again" — and "paragraph" ("mistyped this word so many times I fear I now have some mental block that would prevent me from not spelling 'in' correctly"). Gould's trouble spots, however, are area names, such as Schuylkill and Passyunk, as well the often-abused "committee" and "vacuum."

Flex some orthography muscle at Friday's Philly Lit Spelling Bee. ISTOCK

If you go

Friday, May 13
Johnny Brenda's
Doors: 8 p.m., $10
Johnnybrendas.com

"It's all the double letters," she says.

While most of the money raised goes to The Head & The Hand Press, the winning team of the bee will also win a cash prize for their efforts, as judged by official "pronouncers" (who'll repeat the word, pronounce it slowly and use it in a sentence) Linda Gallant-Moore and Gould.

So far, competing bee teams include Amalgam Comics & Coffeehouse, Lanternfish Press, Editorial Freelancers Union, Apiary Magazine, Backyard Writers Group, Fuze Poetry and The Head & Hand Press.

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Are you an email jerk?

Are you unknowingly creating inbox angst?

JENNIFER SAWYER
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A forgotten attachment. A glaring typo. A never-ending reply-all thread. We've all been on the sending — and receiving — end of common email annoyances. But beyond being more cautious about simple slipups, there are some practical steps you can take to quell inbox angst.

Here's what to consider before you hit send:

Know your audience

Before you begin typing, "Stop, take a breath and think about your audience," career and executive coach Maggie Mistal says. "It's really about [knowing] who you're sending it to and what's going to be easier for them."

Begin with a descriptive subject that clearly highlights what the email will be about. Then think about what you might need from your recipient and vice versa.

Say more with less

There's nothing worse than feeling your eyes glaze over by the time you read paragraph six of an email (if you even get that far). To curb reader fatigue, be as concise as possible, without clouding essential information in wordy paragraphs. "I always say, 'Bullet point me!'" Mistal explains. "You might need to communicate a lot in one email, so separate out the points, and bold the action steps you [the recipient] needs to take." Likewise, don't send three emails when one will suffice just because you're in a rush and forgot some necessary info. Think through what you need to address, and do so in one swoop.

Be mindful of tone

We're all in a rush to get things done, but before hitting "send," consider how your words might be received, given that email lacks the intonation of verbal communication.

"There's no tone in email, so you have to assume that anything you say can be taken the wrong way," Mistal says. Having second thoughts about something you're writing? Mistal suggests having another pair of eyes read it over, or writing a draft and allowing some separation time before sending. "Sleep on it, or if you can't wait overnight, go for a walk around the block," she suggests. "Come back with a fresh perspective."

Know when to take it offline

Praise publicly, criticize privately. It's one thing to compliment a job well done in an email, but if you need to give negative feedback, pick up the phone or address the issue in person. And the worst thing you could ever do? Throw someone under the bus in an email. "Blaming someone else on your team never sits well," Mistal says. "It's lasting and more public" she says, and can trigger defensive reactions. "You're better off picking up the phone and working it out."

Be polite

One-liners are OK if you have a rapport with the other person, but generally beginning with a kind "Hi, how are you?" sets a courteous tone. "Email is an opportunity to get your point across in a way that's respectful," Mistal says. "Etiquette isn't useless — there's a real reason and value."

You are not your resume. ISTOCK

The hardest part of the job search isn't what you think

Feeling demoralized and "flawed" can take a toll on job seekers.

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First dates and job interviews have a lot in common. In both scenarios, success is determined by chemistry, personality, responses to open-ended questions like "Tell me about yourself" and vague assertions about being a good fit. But do you want to pick, say, a computer programmer using the same criteria as you would a life partner?

Not really, says Ofer Sharone, a professor of sociology at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and the author of "Flawed System/Flawed Self: Job Searching and Unemployment Experiences," which compares hiring practices in the U.S. and Israel.

Sharone's research suggest that in the U.S., hiring is often based on a subjective process. Not only does this allow employers to rely on their biases and perpetuate homogeneity in the workplace, but "it creates an experience of the job search which is highly personalized," says Sharone. "So therefore, when you're unemployed and you're facing rejections for six months to a year, it's very common to hear people start talking about they're flawed, or saying 'something is wrong with me.'"

Yes, the search can be a drag, but there are steps job seekers can take to counter the status quo. Sharone offered his best advice for staying upbeat, even while your résumé returns nothing but radio silence.

Know what you're up against.

When hiring is based on highly subjective elements such as chemistry or gut feelings, it can "create a challenge for anyone who is extremely skilled and qualified to try and conform to the mold for what "the right fit" is," Sharone says. "Networking, together with interviews, creates a [hiring] situation that has a lot with intangibles."

The focus on intangibles tends to put more focus on passion, as opposed to skill. This ethos can lead job seekers to take rejections far more personally — particularly those who've been scouring the market for six months or more — and leave them feeling demoralized, and even flawed, says Sharone.

Mind the gap (on your résumé).

Even if you're unemployed, do something career-related. "If you're a professional, you want to have something at the top of the resume that you're currently doing in your field," Sharone says. "You have to be active and up-to-date in your profession, and whether you're paid for it is really secondary. Employers have absurd biases, and this is a way to counter the bias."

Consulting gigs or volunteering are great ways to stay engaged while unemployed, says Sharone. Whether it should or not, the stigma against the unemployed persists.

Seek support.

During a period of unemployment, it's not uncommon for self-esteem to take a hit. "A good way to counter this is to find a peer support group. Find people who are going through the same thing. It deindividualizes the experience," says Sharone.

People often think they're the only ones feeling discouraged, but understanding biases and structural obstacles can prevent frustrated job seekers from putting the onus entirely on their shoulders. "You realize the dice are loaded, but you need to keep rolling the dice nonetheless," he says.

Keep your eye on the prize.

When discouraged, it's easy to fall into extreme thinking, but "you have to recognize the kind of game you're playing. It's somewhere between the lottery and chess. It's a mistake to think you have all the power, or that you have no power," adds Sharone. Ready for another metaphor? "Job seeking is not like baseball. You just need to hit it once."

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10 Most boo-worthy athletes for Philly fans

Who are the 10 most hated players in sports right now? Here's what a Philadelphian would say.

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There is a perpetual debate in the City of Brotherly Love over appropriate situations and recipients for boos in South Philly. With a list a mile long — befitting the long memory and deep love of sport Philadelphia fans exhibit — here's a brief look at the 10 current athletes (and coaches) most worthy of being rained on with boos during the upcoming seasons.

10 Tony Romo, Eli Manning

Cowboys and Giants quarterbacks, respectively

Really anyone on the Eagles' two biggest rivals has reason to be booed, but Dallas' Romo and New York's Manning have claim to special powers over Philly boobirds. The two longest-tenured QBs of NFC East rivals have given Eagles fans much to cheer and complain about, and as long as they stay on the field they'll be the subject of avid hatred.

9 Tom Wilson

Capitals left-winger

There's nothing better than a hockey villain. Apparently, the Flyers have one in Wilson. Prior to their April playoff matchup with the Capitals, the winger told the media: "We don't want to be liked by them. Hopefully, we can keep it that way, that they hate our guts." The Flyers and their fans do Tom.

8 Bryce Harper

Nationals outfielder

Cole Hamels is gone, but the cocky, loud and extremely talented NL MVP is still in the NL East, and every time the Phillies manage to get Harper out fans take a sigh of relief. Hamels, recently traded to the Rangers, plucked the then-rookie outfielder back in 2012 and said: "It's just, welcome to the big leagues. I was trying to hit him. I mean, I'm not going to deny it."

7 Sidney Crosby

Penguins center

No one doubts that Crosby is one of the best hockey players on the planet. But Flyers fans are perfectly validated in booing him every time he takes the ice. He's been known as a bit of a complainer and lacks the toughness Philadelphians expect from top-notch skaters.

Connor Barwin says he expects teammate Sam Bradford to return for mandatory minicamp. GETTY IMAGES

6 LeSean McCoy

Former Eagles running back, currently a Bill

This one could be a bit controversial, because McCoy did not chose to leave — he was traded by Kelly for Kiko Alonso after the 2014 season. But McCoy could not keep his mouth shut after being traded. He also has been tied to an ugly bar fight that left some undercover cops badly beaten. Charges were never filed in the Philadelphia incident, but the issue of character flaws did come up, helping to validate the Eagles' trade decision.

5 DeMarco Murray

Former Eagles running back, currently a Titan

Murray, like Riley Cooper, isn't currently slated to face the Eagles any time soon. But once he does, the Titans running back deserves to face the scorn of Philadelphia fans. He created locker room unrest while earning very little of his $42 million contract, lasting just one season before being mercifully traded after gaining just 3.6 yards per carry in 2015.

4 Riley Cooper

Former Eagles wide receiver, currently a free agent

Cooper is still a free agent but if he signs somewhere and comes back to face the Eagles, he deserves a mountain of boos. He signed a five-year, $22.5 million contract and barely earned any of it, pairing his racist remarks with lackluster play. He also was the beginning of the many racial issues Kelly had to deal with while he was here.

3 Jonathan Papelbon

Former Phillies closer currently Nationals closer

Papelbon came to Philly to win. The Phillies did not win. Papelbon complained and ran his mouth. Papelbon was traded. With the Phillies, he converted his last 37 save attempts. As a National, he's blown four of his last 35. His misery is Philadelphia's joy.

2 Chip Kelly

Former Eagles coach, current 49ers coach

Kelly really rejuvenated Eagles' fans passion and optimism when he first took the stage with his high-paced offense and radical thinking. But then he was anointed coach/GM and methodically cut ties with LeSean McCoy, DeSean Jackson, Jeremy Maclin and several other quality players. What he replaced them with turned an up-and-coming NFC East champion in 2013 into a mediocre, rebuilding squad by the end of his tenure.

1 Sam Bradford

Eagles quarterback

It's kind of sad that a current Philadelphia player is the most boo-worthy athlete in the land, but when you turn your back on the city things usually get ugly. Bradford demanded a trade, despite being overpaid ($22 million guaranteed) and overrated (he's the No. 1 QB on the depth chart), the former Heisman Trophy winner was too intimidated by the Eagles decision to draft Carson Wentz. If he comes back, tail between his legs, his teammates may accept his apology, but will fans?

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Phillies dominant in one-run games

The Phillies have gone an impressive 11-3 in one-run games this season.

KYLE PHILLIPPI
@kyle_phillippi
sports@metro.us

Behind the Phillies surprising start to the season is their ability to have a puncher's chance every outing.

"They don't give up," said manager Pete Mackanin before the team embarked on its current 10-game road trip. "What makes it easier to not give up is when you're in the game in the sixth and seventh inning."

So far, the Phillies have been in almost every game as evidence by their 11-3 mark in one-run games. That total is by far the best in baseball. The next closest team in wins is Seattle with seven. Moreover, eight of the 15 National League teams hold a .500 or below mark in games decided by one run entering Sunday. Just how impressive is that 11-3 tally (improved Sunday in a 6-5 victory vs. Miami)?

The Phillies were 16-27 in one-run games just last season. Through 29 games this year, the team finds themselves five wins away from matching their entire 2015 total. They also are 3-0 in extra innings this season after going 6-9 last year.

This growth shows the Phillies are heading in the right direction. Just being able to hang in around every game is impressive enough after what they went through a year ago, but the fact that they are finally winning these types of games is reason to believe in the Phillies' process.

Believing you can win and actually carrying out that belief are two different things, of course. This is a roster that has talent, much of which remains a work in progress, but that's not the biggest difference with this year's team from last's.

Mackanin deserves a lot of credit for this rather rapid transformation from a team that clinched the No. 1 pick to a roster that believes they have as good of a chance as anyone to compete all season for a wild card spot. He's instilled his infectious confidence onto his players and that has in turn spread onto the field every night.

The attitude has created a 180-degree change from the down-in-the-dumps atmosphere that took over much of 2015 to the now boisterous and youthful buzz that circulations through the clubhouse. When looking at their success in one-run games so far, look no further than this change in atmosphere.

As Mackanin said, their never-say-die mindset will only strengthen as they continue to find themselves in games entering the later innings.

More importantly, though, is that these situations — one-run games accounting for nearly half of their games entering Sunday — are only going to benefit the Phillies in the seasons to come. The more these young players learn how to win, the quicker this process will go.

In the meantime, their success in close games has defined their hopeful start.

The Phillies have leaped to an impressive 18-14 start and continue to exceed expectations on the field. GETTY IMAGES

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Phillies come from behind Sunday to win another series

Back-to-back doubles in the eighth inning put Philadelphia ahead for good in South Florida Sunday afternoon.

EVAN MACY
@evan_macy
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Aaron Nola continues to give the Phils a chance every time he pitches. GETTY IMAGES

For the 14th time, the Phillies found themselves in a one-run game. And for the 11th time, the youthful and overachieving squad came out on top by the slimmest of margins, 6-5 Sunday against the Marlins in Miami.

Back-to-back RBI doubles in the eighth inning by Tyler Goeddel and red-hot Andres Blanco helped the Phillies claw back ahead in a back-and-forth battle as Philly closed three deficits to improve to 18-14 on the year and take two of three in Miami.

Aaron Nola saw his scoreless inning streak end at 23 when he allowed three runs in the fourth frame as the Phils fell behind 3-0. But he was put in a position to earn his third win not long after thanks to a costly Miami mistake.

Two runs scored on an error after a Freddy Galvis base hit with two on in the sixth was mishandled by Adeiny Hechavarria, who overthrew his target badly. A tying run scored on an RBI Goeddel groundout one batter later.

In the seventh, a hit and some smart base-running scored Odubel Herrera on an RBI groundout by Cesar Hernandez to put Philly ahead.

Andrew Bailey came in to pitch in the seventh but was roughed up, relenting the 4-3 lead when Marlins' pinch hitter Chris Johnson hit a solo home run. He was taken out of the game to leave Hector Neris with a two-one one out jam.

Neris relented a sac-fly (off the bat of Justin Bour, scoring Ichiro Suzuki) as the Marlins retook the lead 5-4 after seven.

Goeddel's second RBI was much prettier than his first, as a line drive to right-center gave him a double and scored Emmanuel Burriss to tie things at 5-apiece in the eighth inning. After Blanco's go-ahead and game-winning double, closer Jeanmar Gomez shut the door (after giving up a two-out single). He struck out Giancarlo Stanton in the process, earning the save and clinching the win.

The Phillies rest for a day down south before heading to Atlanta for three games against the last-place Braves to wrap up their current 10-game road trip.

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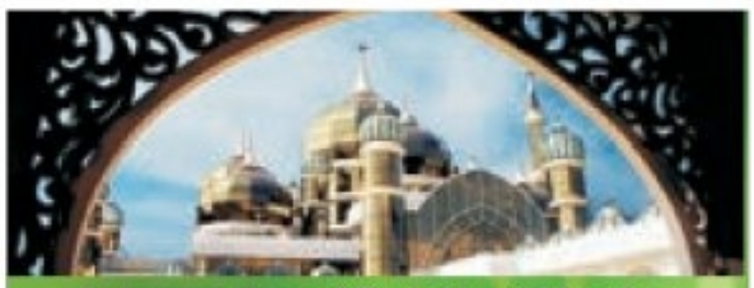

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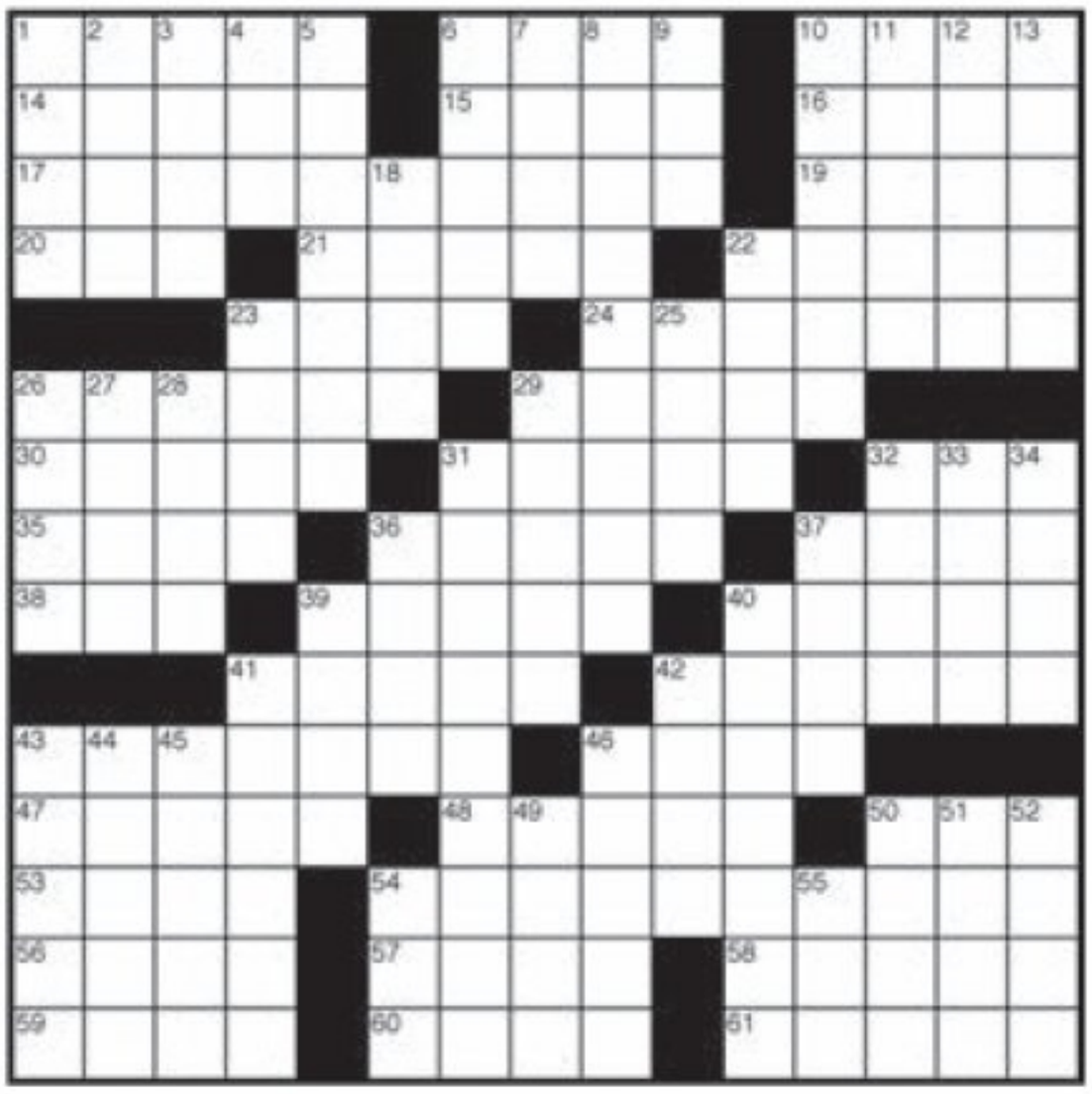

Across

1 Sight-related
6 Lhasa —
10 Customs request
14 Hockey venue
15 Spillane's Hammer
16 Remove wrinkles
17 Tough as nails (hyph.)
19 Part of a deck
20 Ms. Thurman
21 Benefactor
22 Espresso with milk
23 Writer — Seton
24 Title for Josephine
26 Chest
29 Big bucks?
30 Coconut grove
31 Flower goddess
32 1960s style
35 Belt maker's tools
36 Had tea
37 Intuition
38 Can. neighbor
39 Zen riddles
40 Actress Ina —
41 Look at the books
42 Most parched
43 Kind of freak
46 Dipper, sometimes
47 Give — — (care)
48 I thought – never leave!
50 Shooting marble
53 Madeline of "Blazing Saddles"
54 Egyptian character
56 Clapton or Roberts
57 Flying prefix
58 Spine-tingling
59 Dinner and a movie
60 Paperback ID
61 Rock, but not roll

Down

1 Waikiki island
2 Wheels for nanny
3 Trillion, in combos
4 Not Dem. or Rep.
5 Beach huts
6 Garcia's girl
7 Atomic —
8 Closet items, so to speak
9 U.K. lexicon
10 Deputies
11 In a foul mood
12 Arranges
13 Alpaca locale
18 Black mineral
22 Links org.
23 Provides rifles
25 — my words!
26 High priestess of Vulcan
27 Goes left
28 Clay pot
29 Biased viewpoint
31 Weaknesses
32 Distance measure
33 Kyoto sashes
34 Soup can flaw
36 Long-gone bird
37 Colorado ski resort
39 Cobain or Russell
40 River crossers
41 Now (2 wds.)
42 "The Banana Boat Song" (hyph.)
43 Crusted over
44 Tara heroine
45 Pitcher's dream game (hyph.)
46 Evita or Juan
49 Sage or thyme
50 Rookie
51 Neat as — —
52 What fun!
54 Yes, in Kyoto
55 — on (pretend)

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easy

	2	7			5		3	
5			4		7			6
	1				3	7		9
						3	7	
		5		7		9		
	4	1						
4		6	9				8	
8			7		4			1
	9		3			6	4	

hard

1			7		3	6		
7			8					
		4	1			9		
	5		4	7	1			
	1		6		9		2	
			5	8	2		7	
		9			5	7		
					8			5
		3	9		7			6

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Don't be daunted by the changes going on around you. Turn any negative you encounter into a positive. Strive for perfection and detail, and focus on getting things done.

Taurus Make things happen. Aim to improve your life. Alter your living quarters or lifestyle to suit your current needs and projects. Personal changes and romance are favored.

Gemini Something or someone will lead you astray. Resist temptation, and concentrate on what you can accomplish. Arguing will not bring the results you want.

Cancer Your suggestions will be well-received and will put you in the running. Partnerships are favored, and expanding ideas, making plans will improve your life.

Leo You desire change, but will face opposition if you are too blatant about what you want to do. Putting everything in its place before you share your plans will give you an advantage.

Virgo Engage in discussions that will increase your knowledge and help you gain respect. Short business trips will give you an opportunity to promote your ideas.

Libra Don't let a challenge stop you from doing your own thing. Find a space that allows you peace of mind and provides the right setting to develop something spectacular.

Scorpio Sort out personal affairs and discuss your plans with an important person in your life. Someone with interesting ideas will help you reach your destination.

Sagittarius You are best off making some hands-on changes. Physically moving things around or renovating a space to help carry out one of your dreams will be your best outlet.

Capricorn You can reap the rewards for smart moves you have made in the past. Financial gains, settlements and canny negotiations are all favored. Celebrate with someone you love.

Aquarius Do your best to bring about changes that will make others notice you. Children or an older friend or relative will support your efforts and decisions.

Pisces Say less and do more. You'll have outstanding ideas that can help you bypass anyone trying to make you look bad. A partnership is favored, as is romance. **EUGENIA LAST**

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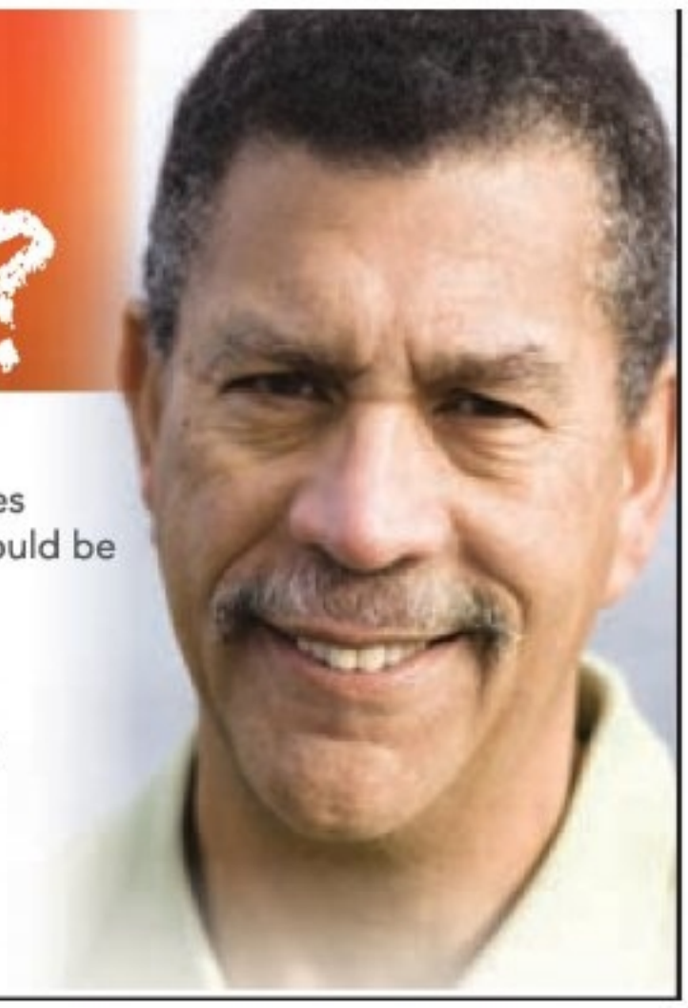
DO YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW HAVE MILD ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE?



PRA Health Sciences in Marlton is now seeking individuals with mild Alzheimer's disease for a research study. To qualify for this study, individuals should be male or female between ages 55 and 85. Other than mild Alzheimer's, they should be in general good health. Females should be postmenopausal for at least one year or surgically sterile.

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